

REMARKS

The claims have been amended for clarity, to prevent an interpretation under 35 USC 112, paragraph 6, and to assure infringement at the time the goods are sold. The subject matter of claim 2 has been combined with the subject matter of claim 1 and claim 2 has been canceled, as have claims 9, 10 and 18. Combining claims 1 and 2 avoids the anticipation rejection of claims 1 and 8 based on 35 USC 102 (b) and Iida et al., US patent 4,682,768.

Claims 21 and 22 have been added to provide applicants with the protection to which they are deemed entitled; paragraph 33 of the application as filed provides an antecedent basis for the subject matter of claims 21 and 22.

Claim 2, as previously submitted, in combination with claim 1 was not anticipated by WIKE, Jr., US 5,177,347. WIKE, JR. discloses an operating chain having a succession of components. Each of these components, when considered alone, is not capable of carrying out an action on a surface of an object, as required by claim 1, upon which the remaining claims depend. This is particularly true of the requirements of newly added claim 21 which indicates at least one of the operating stations of claim 1 includes a magnetic strip encoder for applying a magnetic strip to the surface of the object and claim 22 which indicates at least one of the operating stations of claim 1 includes a printer for applying a printed strip to the service of the object..

Fig. 2 of WIKE, JR. discloses the components of the operating chain. All of the components that form this operating chain define a single treatment of the surface of the object.

Then, according to this definition of an operating station, it is clear that WIKE, JR. does not disclose an operating chain which comprises a succession of operating stations, wherein each of these operating stations, when considered alone, is capable of carrying out an action on a surface of the object.

Claim 1 requires an operating chain to include a succession of operating stations, each capable of carrying out an action on a surface of the object, to provide to the device the capability of performing several types of treatments to one or more surfaces of an

object without requiring outing of the object from one operating chain to another between two different surface treatments.

Thus, amended claim 1 is not anticipated by WIKE, JR.. Since the remaining claims depend on claim 1 and the secondary references fail to cure the deficiencies in the rejection based on WIKE, JR., all pending claims are allowable.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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